



Innovative Concept Academy (ICA)
Report To Executive Committee and Community
Reporting Period: July 2009-December 2009

The Innovative Concept Academy is a first-of-its-kind joint venture between the St. Louis Family Court, St. Louis Public Schools, and MERS/Goodwill. The partnership also includes a number of community agencies that provide a myriad of services for St. Louis at-risk youth between the ages of ten and nineteen.

GOVERNANCE

Judge Jimmie M. Edwards, Administrative Judge-Family Court, and Dr. Lewis C. Chartock, President/CEO of MERS/Goodwill, are co-chairs for the ICA Executive Committee. Other members of the ICA Executive Committee are: Marvin R. Talley, Rachel Keller Brown, Freeman Bosley, Jr., Rodney Hubbard, Mark Arens, Darryl Jones, Eric Rhone, Bridget McDermott Flood, Lanora Buchanan, Esther Williams and Joli Baker.

FAMILY COURT

Four Family Court staff members are housed at ICA. The positions include a Deputy Juvenile Officer I (DJO I), Deputy Juvenile Officer III (DJO III), Evening and Weekend Coordinator, and Secretary. The staff are supervised by the Supervisor and Assistant Supervisor of the Truancy Initiative. The professional staff provide many services, including case management, outreach, monitoring of day and after-school programming. Detention Alternative Officers and two Family Court practicum students are also assigned to ICA.

Additional duties performed by the staff include the following:

- **Student Assessment**

Student assessment is an on going collaborative process at ICA. It begins with an initial intake conducted by the Family Court case management team. The intake interview process provides an informational exchange that introduces the student and parent to ICA while providing school, social and family history information about the student. This information is used to determine the most appropriate day treatment services and after school program placement. Team staffings are held bi-monthly and include representatives from all of the day school providers, SLPS and Family Court. Two students are chosen and their parent(s) are invited to attend a 9:00am or 10:00am team staffing to assess student progress, concerns, and provider services. There is also a case manager team review and update on each student held weekly.

- **Monitor Student Attendance**

Students sign in every morning after going through a security check. Tardy students sign in upon arrival. Class attendance is taken daily by the teachers and turned into the school office. Case managers follow up with parents of absent students.

- **Coordinate Volunteers**

Six retired teachers/religious sisters are working at ICA several days a week. Two sisters provide instruction to the Alternative Suspension Program students Monday through Thursday mornings. Three sisters assist in math classes and one sister helps out in MERS/Goodwill's GED program.

ICA currently has two independent volunteers who have made a weekly commitment to the school. Their activities include greeting students in the morning, lessons on current topics, visiting classrooms and assisting teachers. Two other volunteer applications are pending. A group of 10 men from the faith based community and their Pastor toured the school building and have pledged their support to the school. They have donated 1000 ties to the school and are currently collecting belts for the male students. The group expressed interest in participating in the next school positive achievement assembly and, is open to ideas concerning how individuals or their congregation can best serve the students and the school. Other organizations and faith based groups have also expressed an interest in supporting the school. As we are near the completion of our first semester, we have a better understanding of our needs and how we can best utilize individual volunteers and community support.

- **Parent Engagement**

Parent engagement is another ongoing process at Innovative Concept Academy. Parent inclusion is a team mission and effort. Parent engagement began with DJO home visits to the first 30 students assigned to the school in early August and continues through the individual initial intake process with the child, parent and Court assigned case manager.

Teachers, school, court staff, and day school providers are encouraged to call parents or send a note home to report positive achievements. Parents are always welcome at the school. They are encouraged to drop by and maintain contact with the staff. The parents of four students are invited to the school each month for individual meetings with the ICA day team staff to discuss student progress, concerns and action plan.

A parent survey was created and distributed during parent/teacher conference dates. The results will be used to plan and engage parents in programs that interest them. A student/family activity with a community service component is planned for the end of the year holiday season.

- **Alternative Suspension Program (ASP)**

A suspension program has been established for SLPS and Charter School students who are assigned a DJO, in grades 6th-11th, and are out on short-term suspension - which is usually 3-5 days. The program runs the full school day. Students are given bus passes for transportation.

Sister Raphael Karnish and Sister Corinee Struckhoff are two volunteer nuns that help with the program Monday-Thursday from 9:00am-12:00pm. The sisters assist students with homework and tutoring throughout the morning. In the afternoon, a schedule has been set up which consists of community volunteers who come and speak to the students. There is also an hour of recreation time, which is spent in the gym. In addition to the two sisters, Detention Alternative Program (DAP) staff assist in monitoring the program and providing structured activities. Community Conflict Services (CCS) conducts talking circles and discusses harm questions (e.g., who was harmed, what was harmed, how the harm is repaired, and who is responsible for repairing the harm). Lastly, the students receive drug education twice a week from Bridgeway. Once the short-term suspension is over they return to their assigned schools. During this process the assigned DJO checks on the students' attendance and provide oversight of the Alternative Suspension Program.

- **Evening Reporting at the ICA(ERC)**

The Evening Reporting Center(ERC) began at the ICA on September 14, 2009. Since its inception, juveniles referred to the Family Court have been transported by Detention Alternatives Program (DAP) staff to participate in the various programs scheduled. The ERC juveniles are able to easily blend into the after-school programs scheduled for the students at the ICA. When the after-school programs end and the ICA students depart ERC participants remain to participate in the available programs.

Since the ERC opened at the ICA, programs are now available for girls. More importantly, a female DAP staff person is now available to transport girls to the ERC on Mondays and Tuesdays. To date, there have been no referrals for girls.

Juveniles are sanctioned to attend the ERC and are also ordered to participate as a condition of their pre-adjudication release from detention. There are also instances when juveniles are ordered to attend the ERC as a dispositional alternative and as a condition of Official Court Supervision.

MERS/Goodwill JUVENILE TRANSITION PROGRAM

(August 20, 2009 – December 16, 2009)

Referrals

- 64 students were referred from MERS/Goodwill
- 18 students were referred from Family Court
- 10 students were terminated
- 5 students are service interrupted status

Education

- 16 students are enrolled in Missouri Options GED program
- 5 students receive tutoring

Volunteer Work Experience

- 8 students completed volunteer work experiences
- 6 students are enrolled in a volunteer work experience

Job Readiness Training

- 4 students have completed job readiness training

Active Job Development

- 21 students are in active job development

Mental Health Services

- 22 students have engaged in group and share trauma experiences.
- 11 students have demonstrated improved psychological and school functioning after 12 weeks
- 11 students are applying new coping skills and uses these skills to manage stress or cope with problems after 4 weeks.
- All 22 students have remained free of new criminal charges.
- 8 have been referred and/or receive additional mental health/substance abuse services.

SYSTEMS PARTNERS

- **Children's Division (CD)**

Alan Duckworth, supervisor for the CD Family Centered Services group reported that CD still plans to move to ICA. The State budget cuts have been rough on the agency and has slowed progress toward the move to ICA. Mr. Duckworth and his staff have toured the school and are excited about the move.

The Family Centered Services work group at ICA will consist of five -six workers and a supervisor. This unit works with "intact families" providing empowerment skills and connecting families to the services and agencies they need to avoid formal court referral. The workers monitor families 90 - 180 days to make sure everything is going well.

- **Division of Youth Services (DYS)**

Donald Pokorny is the new regional administrator at DYS. While a definite date to move has not been made, Mr. Pokorny is certain that progress is being made. Several groups of DYS administrators and personnel have visited and toured ICA. DYS now uses the ICA first floor conference room for staff meetings. DYS student education/treatment program and staff will occupy space on the third floor.

- **Food**

ICA has partnered with DYS to provide meals Monday through Thursday for ICA after-school program participants. DYS delivers boxed lunches consisting of a sandwich, chips, fruit and dessert each day. Students sign in each day and the logs are submitted to DYS on a weekly basis. ICA and DYS continue to discuss the feasibility of serving a hot meal to the students during the winter months.

ICA has also been approved for snacks through the Department of Human Services, Division of Youth and Family Services, After School At-Risk Feeding Program.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- **ACT Prep Program**

The ACT Prep Program is a collaboration between Princeton Review, Innovative Concept Academy, and Laurence Maroney. The program will begin in January 2010. However, one or two classes may be held in December so youth can take the pre-test and scores can be calculated before the January session begins. The ACT that the students will be preparing for will take place in April.

To qualify for the ACT Prep Program, students must be an ICA student or an area athlete who plays for an organized team, and be a Junior or Senior with a minimum of 12 credits. Coach Brian Simmons from Cardinal Ritter High School will assist in the recruitment process and act as the liaison with the area high school coaches.

- **AIMS Program**

ICA has also partnered with St. Louis University School of Medicine-Adventures in Medicine and Science (AIMS) Program. Approximately once a month, a staff member from the AIMS Program teaches at ICA and provides a demonstration and hands-on experience with human organs to demonstrate the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol along with other risk taking behaviors.

This school year, AIMS has been to ICA twice. During the first demonstration, the heart was discussed and the second demonstration consisted of the brain. Human and animal organs have been passed around for the students to see and get a "real live" picture and hands-on approach of the organs. AIMS works with the first and second period science classes for the middle and high school students, along with the students in the Alternative Suspension Program.

- **SLATE**

The Family Court and MERS/Goodwill program collaborated with SLATE during the summer to provide services for at-risk youth. Two programs, Urban Works and Earn to Learn, were operated out of ICA.

SCHOOL DAY PROVIDERS

The Innovative Concept Academy offers a variety of services to address the students' needs.

- **Children's Advocacy Services (CAS)**

Children's Advocacy Services provides a coping skills group for males and females as well as individual therapy. CAS expertise is in the area of trauma. Many of the ICA students have experienced trauma throughout their lives. The two groups are skill focused and teach students ways to manage their stress and anger. Currently, 21 students are receiving services from CAS. CAS is at capacity and a waiting list has been started.

- **Bridgeway Behavioral Health**

Bridgeway has a counselor housed at ICA to provide drug education, counseling, testing, and referrals to treatment. The student's parent/guardian must sign a release giving the counselor permission to test. The results are kept confidential and shared only with the parent and student.

- **Community Conflict Services**

CCS has one full-time and one part-time staff person to provide conflict mediation, talking circles, and Anger Replacement Training. Students on the verge of a conflict and those who have fought or argued are referred to discuss the problem, accept responsibility and to repair the harm. CCS also reviews the harm questions (who was harmed, what was harmed, how the harm is repaired, and who is responsible for repairing the harm) with the students in the Alternative Suspension Program.

- **Churchill Center and School**

Churchill Center and School provides two teachers each school day. These teachers offer individualized reading instructions to seven students. Churchill is at capacity.

A monthly meeting is held with the Churchill team to discuss issues, facilitate communication, and to problem solve.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS/PARTNERS

The after-school programming began on September 14, 2009. The program runs Monday-Thursday 4:15pm-5:45pm. After-school provider meetings are held once a month. This is an opportunity for service providers to interact with one another and share programming ideas. These meetings also serve as an opportunity for service providers to discuss various strategies for classroom management and student retention.

▪First Semester Programs Offered:

- **Positive Alternatives for Youth (Gang Intervention)**
- **Throwing and Growing/Merle Mensy Foundation (Female Fitness)**
- **Friends With a Better Plan (Lifeskills)**
- **Institute of Ingenuity (Motivational Program)**
- **Future Aspirations (Job Readiness)**
- **MINE-St. Louis Department of Health (Lifeskills)**
- **Loosen the Leash (Dog training)**
- **KatyAnn Foundation (Female/Lifeskills)**
- **Tennis (Recreation)**
- **Portfolio Art Gallery (Artistic/Written Expression)**
- **YMCA (Fitness/Nutrition)**
- **Omega Psi Phi-Project Uplift (Male/Lifeskills)**
- **St. Louis Chess Club (Scholastic Chess and Competition)**
- **Sylvan (Math Tutoring)**
- **Cameron Youth Orchestra (Strings)**

- **Building Blocks Employment Connection (Job Readiness)**
- **Community Conflict Services-Project Lead (Conflict Resolution/Anger Management)**

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Children's Advocacy Services provided training entitled "The Effects of Trauma in the Classroom." This training explained what complex trauma is, how it may look in the classroom and strategies for working with these students.

Community Conflict Services provided training to the St. Louis Public School staff prior to the start of the school year and to the majority of the School Day Providers. The training focused on communication styles and the talking circle process.

<u>Current SLPS Population</u>	<u>Referred for Special Services</u>	<u>1st Semester Students returned to SLPS</u>	<u>Average Daily Attendance</u>
Males - 77	18	40	92%
Females - 44			
MERS/ Goodwill - 64			

REFERRAL SCHOOLS(Provided by Students)

AAA Busch Middle School
 Alternative North School
 Alternative South School
 Beaumont High School
 Big Picture Middle School
 Blewett Middle School
 Blow Middle School
 Bryan Hill School
 Bunche International Studies
 Carnahan School of the Future
 Carr Lane Middle School
 Central VPA High School
 Cleveland High School

Compton Drew ILC Middle School
 Confluence Academy
 Clyde C. Miller Career Academy
 Dewey International Studies
 E.H. Lyle Academy
 Fanning Middle School
 Gateway Middle School
 Gateway High School
 Kennard CJA
 Langston Middle School
 Long Middle School
 L'Ouverture Middle School
 Lyon @ Blow Middle School

Mallinckrodt ABI
McKinley Classical Leadership
Academy
Metro High School
Northwest Middle School (Big
Picture)
Nottingham CAJT
Roosevelt High School
Shaw VPA School
Sherman CEC
Sigel CEC
Soldan International Studies High
School

Stix ECC I
St. Louis Charter School
Stevens Middle School
Summer High School
Vashon High School
Walbridge ECC-ACC
Washington Montessori
Wilkinson ECC I
Yeatman Middle School

MERS/Goodwill Staff

Assist Vice-President
Community Resource Coordinator
Employment Specialist
Youth Coordinator
G.E.D. Instructor
Coordinator of Placement Services
Case Manager
Case Manager
Job Developer
Employment/Retention Specialist

Esther Williams
Rachelle Brent
Gary Woods
Spencer McCall
Marurine Burns
Rayfinette Sanford
Pamela Neal
Kerrick DaValt
Alfronzo Branch
Dawn Nasiruddin

Innovative Concept School Staff

Principal
Social Worker
Teacher
Administrative Assistant
Teacher
Teacher
Teacher
Librarian
Counselor
Teacher
Librarian
Teacher
Teacher
Teacher
Teacher

Talley, Marvin
Powers, Derek
Adams, Sue
Anderson, James
Burns, Maurine
Carr, Kimberly
Fairley, Ameerah
Fields, Gwendolyn
Flowers, Jarrell
Johnson, Cicley
Knighten, Cynthia
Lathan, Jennie
Leichliter, Ninel
Parker, Rodney
Patterson, Danyale

Teaching and Learning Facilitator
 Teacher
 Teacher
 Administrative Assistant
 Teacher
 Secretary
 Safety Officer
 Safety Officer
 Custodian
 Custodian
 Custodian

Pezzani, Carla
 Robinson Riddle, Iris
 Schmitt, Sherry
 Stuckey, Gale
 Smith, Leslie
 Miller, Sandra
 Edwards, Rita
 Miller, Jayson
 Davis, Darrell
 Dee, Darrell
 Gunn, Raynard

Innovative Pathway Office Staff Members

Coordinator
 Executive Administrative Assistant
 Secretary
 Intake Clerk
 Compliance Teacher
 Hearing Official
 Roster Administrator
 Hearing Official
 Special Education Compliance Teacher

Shackleford, Betty
 Coleman, Brenda
 McClendon, Eloise
 Brown, Ruth
 Bell, D.
 Curtis, Sherman
 Davis, E.
 Brown, Travis
 Steed, Cheryl

Volunteers & Community Partners

American Federation of Teachers,
 Local 420
 African-American Aldermanic
 Caucus
 Freeman R. Bosley Jr.
 Antioch Baptist Church (Rev. Dr. F.
 Delano Benson, Jr.)
 Bridgeway
 Call to Oneness
 Cameron Youth Orchestra
 Central Baptist Church (Rev. Dr.
 Robert C. Scott)
 Chess Club and Scholastic Center
 Child Advocacy Center
 Churchill Center & School
 Commission on Children, Youth and
 Families, Mayor Francis Slay
 Community Alternatives
 Community Conflict Services

Culinary Training (Darryl Jones)
 Delta Sigma Theta,
 Omega Psi Phi,
 Alpha Kappa Alpha
 Alpha Phi Alpha
 Demetrious Johnson Charitable
 Foundation
 Edgewood Children's Services
 Enterprise Holdings, Inc.
 Eric Galloway Company
 Richard V. Gaines
 Gary Kaplan
 Harris-Stowe State University
 Incarnate Word Foundation
 Innovative Pathways
 Just-Us Tennis Foundation, Inc.
 Kappa Alpha, Kappa
 Bennice Jones-King
 Laurence Maroney A.C.T. Prep

Maurice Meredith Photography
McEagle Company
Mental Health Board Trustees
Michael Beck
Missouri Children's Division
Missouri Department of Mental
Health
Missouri Division of Youth Services
Missouri Legislative Black Caucus
Mound City Bar Association
My Sista's Keeper: Project Iris
National Pan-Hellenic Council, Inc.
of St. Louis
Paul and Midge McKee
Pelican Printing Company
Portfolio Gallery
Positive Alternative for Youth
Project Uplift
Rex and Jeanne Sinquefield
Rodney Hubbard
Sanford Brown College
Shalom City of Peace Church (Rev.
Dr. Freddie J. Clark)

St. Louis Agency of Training &
Employment
St. Louis Center for Family
Development
St. Louis Metropolitan Police
Department
St. Louis Urban Corps.
St. Louis University School of
Medicine
St. Louis University School of
Law (BLSA)
The Rhema Church (Pastor Norman
Owens)
The Simon Foundation
The Stolar Partnership
Throwing and Growing (Myrle
Mensey)
Visions Management Group, Inc.
(Eric Rhone)
(Yes Program) Youth Empowerment
Services
YMCA